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SNAPSHOT

Reputation Leads to Recruitment

As USAID's portfolio grows, its commitment to transparency and good service has had a positive impact on its reputation



USAID/CDP/CADG

Women painting and plastering a veranda at a girls's school on the outskirts of Jalalabad.

Assured by a reputation for providing a safe and well-monitored working environment, women have been increasingly willing to work on USAID-funded school repair projects in Nangarhar Province.

In June 2011, USAID began repairs to three schools in the Jalalabad area. Combined, these schools serve more than 9,000 students including more than 3,000 girls. The repairs, which include painting, plastering, replacing broken doors and windows, and hooking up electrical wiring, are part of a larger effort to improve conditions in and around Jalalabad. Overall, USAID has worked with its implementing partner, Central Asia Development Group, to repair nine schools in Jalalabad and the surrounding districts in Nangarhar Province.

This approach of launching multiple projects in a single region has enabled USAID to build a reputation for being reliable and transparent, ensuring a safe work environment, and paying its workers promptly.

In particular, the Jalalabad schools project has garnered positive word-of-mouth for having well-monitored, harassment-free worksites. This has attracted many local female job-seekers, whose families rest assured that the women will have a safe and respectful working environment.

A manager in charge of the latest schools project describes the impact: "With the first project, it was difficult to hire even 20 women. USAID was still relatively unknown, thus we had to give strong assurances to convince women to come and work. Now, with this latest project, we easily signed up 172 women during the recruitment week."

Local women interviewed said that it was the positive assurances from friends that drove them to seek work at USAID worksites. A friend who had done work on an earlier project persuaded Anar to seek work. Anar said, "I really wanted to work, but there were few safe places available. A friend of mine recommended this project and went with me to the women's affairs director. I have been very happy with the outcome and will also recommend this to my friends."